



REASON & REVELATION

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FALLING AWAY FROM

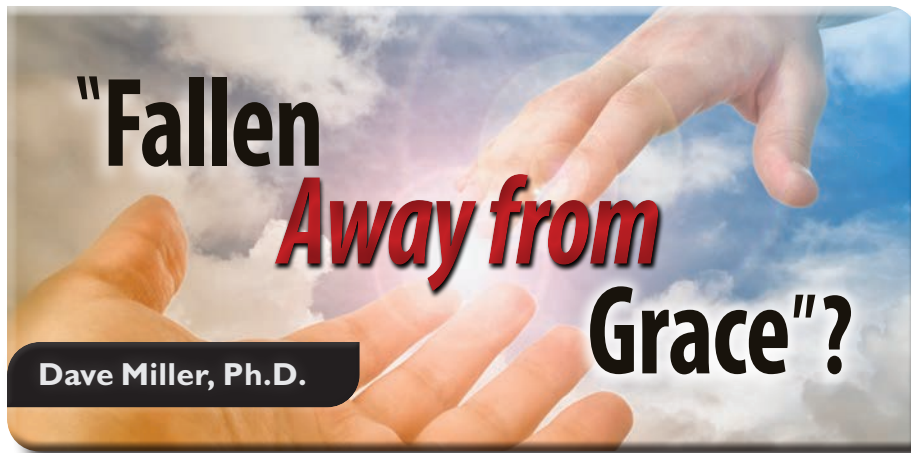
Grace

RESPONSE to a
Facebook Post:
**The Lord's Supper
on Sunday?**

**New
Book**

The **Ironclad Beetle:**
Armored Tank of the
INSECT WORLD

Did **Josiah**
Die in **Megiddo**
or **Jerusalem?**



ONE of the doctrines of Calvinism that has created a considerable stir through the years has been the notion of the “perseverance of the saints”—commonly referred to as “the impossibility of apostasy” or “once saved, always saved.” In his epistle to the churches of the Galatian province, Paul wrote a remark that calls that doctrine into question. The King James Version reads: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are **fallen from grace**.” Most versions have a similar reading. The NKJV and NASB also have “fallen from grace.” Quite a few translations add the word “away” in their rendering—“**fallen away from grace**”—including the ASV, ESV, RSV, NRSV, NIV, CEB, CJB, ISV, MOUNCE, NET, TLV, WEB, WYC, and YLT. The word “away” may leave the impression that persons were heading toward the state of salvation but, prior to achieving that state and

entering into it, they veered away from it (see Figure 1).

The Greek term translated “fallen” is from the verb *pipto* meaning “to fall.” In Galatians 5:4, the word has the preposition *ek* prefixed to it. This Greek preposition means primarily “out of.” *Ekipipto*, then, means literally “to fall out of.”¹ One would need to be “in” a realm or sphere in order to “fall out of” it (see Figure 2). In the case of the Galatians, they had been converted to become Christians (Acts 18:23) and were counted as being **in** Christ’s church (Galatians 1:2-3).

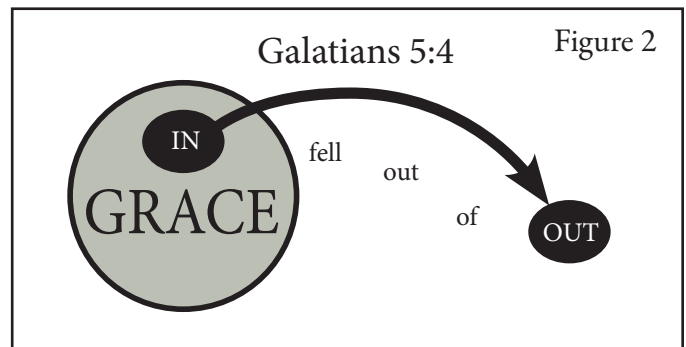
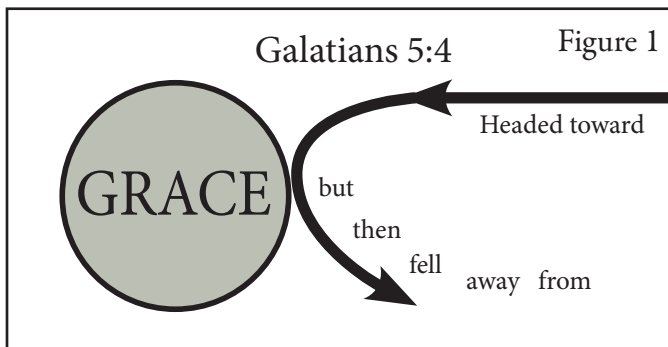
Baptist Greek grammarian A.T. Robertson explains the language: “Ye did fall **out of** grace,” “ye left the sphere of grace in Christ and took your stand in the sphere of law as your hope of salvation.”² Mounce adds: “to fall from, forfeit, lose.”³ Meyer noted: “Ye *have forfeited* the relation of being *objects of divine grace*.”⁴ And Eadie explains: “Christ’s method of justification is wholly of grace, and those

who rely on law and merit are in opposition to grace—are fallen **out of** it.”⁵

These observations are buttressed by the fact that in the same verse, Paul says to the Christians: “You have become **estranged** from Christ.”⁶ The word means to “dissever from.”⁷ In addition to “estranged,” other translations have “severed” (ASV/ESV/RSV), “alienated” (NIV), and “cut yourselves off from Christ” (NRSV). Therefore, it is possible at one time to be within the grace of Christ and thereby saved, and then to so conduct oneself as to be severed from, to fall out of, and forfeit that grace.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Joseph Thayer (1977 reprint), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 198.
- ² A.T. Robertson (1931), *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press), 4:309, emp. added.
- ³ Robert Mounce (2006), *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), p. 1137.
- ⁴ Heinrich Meyer (1884), *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Galatians* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls), p. 222, italics in orig.
- ⁵ John Eadie (1979 reprint), *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), 1:384.
- ⁶ Frederick Danker, et al. (2000), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press), p. 526.
- ⁷ Wesley Perschbacher, ed. (1990), *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 226.



The Ironclad Beetle:

Armored Tank of the Insect World

Kyle Butt, M.Div.

IF there is an unwanted beetle or cockroach running across your kitchen floor, what is your first reaction? For many of us, it might be to step on the intruder or smash it with a shoe. While that might work for the average bug, there is one beetle that would laugh at your pitiful attempt to smash it, since its armor is so tough. The diabolical ironclad beetle is one of the world's toughest critters, and has a shell that is so strong it can get run over by a car and scuttle off with hardly a scratch.

Just how strong is this rugged beetle's armor? Researchers have discovered that the beetle can withstand pressure from loads that are 39,000 times its own body weight. To help us understand the significance of that fact, it would be "akin to a 90 kg (200 lb—KB) human withstanding the weight of about 280 double-decker buses."¹ Of course, with this kind of armor technology—the real life equivalent of something out of a superhero movie—scientists want to know how it works. What makes the beetle's exoskeleton so remarkably strong?

When the research team zoomed its microscopes in on the hard outer shell of the beetle, they found "two key microscopic features" that "help it withstand crushing forces."² First, they discovered that the two halves of the outer shell connect by a series of joints that interlock with multiple connection points. The amount of interconnectivity varies between different parts of the beetle's body. Certain areas are extremely tightly connected, while others are looser

and act almost as springs that cushion and absorb shock.³ The second key feature, as described by Rivera and his colleagues in the *Nature* magazine article that discusses the major work they did on the beetle, is detailed in very complicated engineering terms in the article.⁴ Temming summarized it well when she wrote:

The second key feature is a rigid joint, or suture, that runs the length of the beetle's back and connects its left and right sides. A series of protrusions, called blades, fit together like jigsaw puzzle pieces to join the two sides. These blades contain layers of tissue glued together by proteins, and are highly damage-resistant. When the beetle is squashed, tiny cracks form in the protein glue between the layers of each blade. Those small, healable fractures allow the blades to absorb impacts without completely snapping...⁵

Rivera's team noted that their research may provide significant knowledge to our current understanding of mechanical engineering. Under a section titled "Biomimetic sutures," they explain that when the suture design of the beetle is compared and tested against that found in our most advanced "turbine engines and aerospace structures," the design of the beetle performs better than our best designs. They found that blades "mimicking the DIB (diabolical ironclad beetle—KB) suture are slightly stronger... than current engineering fasteners..., yet demonstrate a substantial increase (more than 100%) in energy displacement."⁶ They went on to say that based on our new knowledge of how the beetle's armor is designed, they believe that in our current fields of engineering there is "considerable potential for further improvement of these interdigitated interfaces by tuning material parameters."⁷ In other words, we can copy this beetle's design and make stronger material than we have at the present.

Sadly, the obvious implication of the beetle's armor design is completely missed by the research team. They incorrectly attribute these phenomenal features to "millions of years" of evolutionary change due to "environmental pressures." Such a conclusion truly defies logic. Literally, the most brilliant human



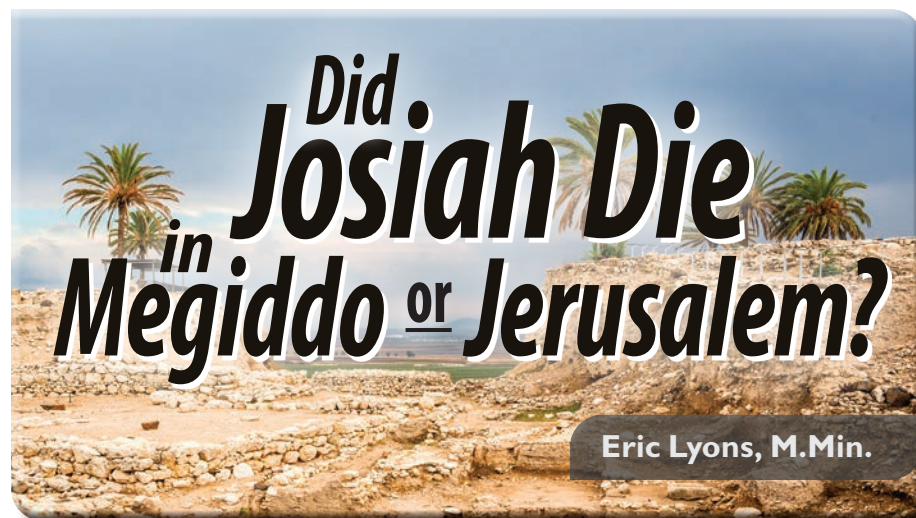
Texas Ironclad Beetle (*Zopheridae*, *Zopherus nodulosus haldemani*)
USA, TX, Bastrop Co.: Red Rock
Lockwood Drive
April 3, 2016

Public domain image by Alejandro Santillana
Produced as part of the "Insects Unlocked" project
The University of Texas at Austin

researchers in the world have, for many decades, collaborated together to contemplate, engineer, design, and build the most advanced connecting joints and protective structures ever conceived in the human mind. They have used these joints and structures, as rocket scientists, to build aerospace devices that must withstand massive amounts of pressure. And for all that, when we look at the tiny, two-centimeter long diabolical ironclad beetle, its armor eclipses the abilities of our best and brightest rocket scientists. An unbiased observer cannot miss the implication. Whoever designed the beetle's armor possesses an intelligence superior to the combined abilities of the world's rocket scientists. How long will it take the human race to recognize that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9)? Isn't it ironic that the lofty ways of God are so clearly evident in a tiny, ground-crawling beetle?

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Nicola Davis (2020), "Scientists Reveal How Diabolical Ironclad Beetle Can Bear Huge Weights," *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/oct/21/scientists-reveal-diabolical-ironclad-beetle-bear-huge-weights>.
- ² Maria Temming (2020), "The Diabolical Ironclad Beetle Can Survive Getting Run Over by a Car, Here's How," *Science News*, <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/diabolical-ironclad-beetle-exoskeleton-armor-impossible-squish>.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Jesus Rivera et al., "Toughening Mechanisms of the Elytra of the Diabolical Ironclad Beetle," *Nature*, Vol. 586, October 22, 2020, p. 543.
- ⁵ Temming.
- ⁶ Rivera, et al.
- ⁷ Ibid.



ACCORDING to skeptics, the writers of Kings and Chronicles were contradictory in their recording of where King Josiah died. Popular skeptic Steve Wells lists 2 Kings 23:29-30 and 2 Chronicles 35:23-24 as #253 in his list of "contradictions" in the Bible,¹ while the website 1001biblecontradictions.com cataloged these verses as "contradiction" #250.² The late skeptic Dennis McKinsey highlighted these verses in one of the early issues of his journal *Biblical Errancy*, claiming they represented one of the "simple, straight-forward problems" of the Bible.³ So what, exactly, do these verses say?

According to 2 Kings 23:29-30: In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And **Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo** when he confronted him. Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

On the other hand, 2 Chronicles 35:23-24 reads:

And **the archers shot King Josiah**; and the king said to his

servants, "Take me away, for I am severely wounded." His servants therefore took him out of that chariot and put him in the second chariot that he had, and **they brought him to Jerusalem. So he died**, and was buried in one of the tombs of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

Is there actually a contradiction between these passages, or is there merely an unfair desire for them to contradict without real proof of such discrepancy? As is the case with most allegations of biblical inconsistencies, once again skeptics **assume** (1) the worst, and (2) much more than they can ever prove.

The two accounts of the death of Josiah are not contradictory but supplementary. Just as reading multiple reports of a current news event should give the reader a more robust view of things, reading both accounts of Josiah's death gives us a fuller picture, not a discrepant one. Though Pharaoh Necho had no quarrels (at least on this occasion) with Josiah and his army (2 Chronicles 35:20-21), nevertheless Josiah ignored "the words of Necho from the mouth of God" (2 Chronicles 35:22). The King of Judah foolishly "disguised himself" and went "to fight in the Valley of Megiddo" (2 Chronicles 35:22), where Pharaoh

Necho “killed him” (2 Kings 23:29). The chronicler details that it was **the archers** (under Pharaoh’s authority) who shot Josiah (35:23). This difference is not one generally highlighted by skeptics as a contradiction between the two accounts. Most fair-minded people understand that a “king,” “president,” or some other ruler may be said to “do something” when, in actuality, he gave the command for it to be done. That is, it was done under his authority and thus (in one legitimate sense) “by him.” If skeptics can seemingly concede the sensibleness in this difference between Kings and Chronicles, one wonders why they will not also consider possible, rational explanations for other differences by two different, independent writers of two different historical accounts?

Could it be that the phrase in 2 Kings 23:29 that “Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo” means nothing more than it was at Megiddo that King Josiah received his mortal blow, but that his heart actually stopped beating somewhere else, sometime later? Suppose a man is shot on Main Street but is not pronounced dead until he’s in an ambulance, halfway to the hospital. Can one not truthfully say (in one sense) that the man was killed on Main Street—that he received his “dying blow” there, though his brain activity did not technically stop until he was in the ambulance or perhaps at the hospital? Surely to ask is to answer. Admittedly, a few translations word 2 Kings 23:30 as Josiah being “carried...in a chariot dead (*meeth*) from Megiddo” (KJV), but, as John Haley noted many years ago, the Hebrew term *meeth* can mean “dying or in a dying state.”⁴

Furthermore, simply because the chronicler noted “[s]o he [Josiah] died” **after** he mentioned that Josiah’s servants “brought him to Jerusalem” (2 Chronicles 35:24) is not proof that Josiah actually

died in Jerusalem. As E.M. Zerr observed in his *Bible Commentary*: “The statement **and he died**...is just a common form of expression in the Bible, where the several facts of a circumstance may be named with very little regard for their chronological order.”⁵ Indeed, the chronicler is merely stating the **fact** that Josiah died and not exactly **when** he died. As we have noted in other articles,⁶ Bible writers often recorded their material topically or climactically, and not necessarily chronologically. We should no more assume the chronicler was writing strictly sequentially in 2 Chronicles 35:24 than we should when we ask our spouse to tell us how his or her day went. (What reasonable person would criticize others for not telling various events in chronological order if that was not their stated intention?)

The fact that Dennis McKinsey thought so much of the question regarding where Josiah died, even contending it is one of the “simple, straight-forward problems” of the Bible, should be an indication of just how weak his case (and others’) is against the Bible. Scripture reveals

that Josiah died after receiving his “death blow” in battle at Megiddo. Precisely when and where he took his final breath, we do not know, nor do we have to know to exonerate the Bible writers of any proven error in their penning of Scripture.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Steve Wells (2013), *The Skeptics Annotated Bible* (SAB Books), p. 1614. See also pp. 548,642.
- ² “1001 Contradictions & Discrepancies in the Christians Bible” (2014), #250, <http://www.1001biblecontradictions.com/I3d%20-%20HOJ%20%5B234-258%5D.html>.
- ³ Dennis McKinsey (1983), “Issue No. 5,” *Biblical Errancy*, May, p. 29.
- ⁴ John Haley (1977 reprint), *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 376.
- ⁵ E.M. Zerr (1954), *Bible Commentary* (Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Publications), pp. 278-279, emp. in orig.
- ⁶ Eric Lyons (2005), “Alleged Chronological Contradictions,” <https://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=6&article=1582>. See also Eric Lyons (2004), “In What Order Did Satan Tempt Jesus?” <https://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=23&article=746>.

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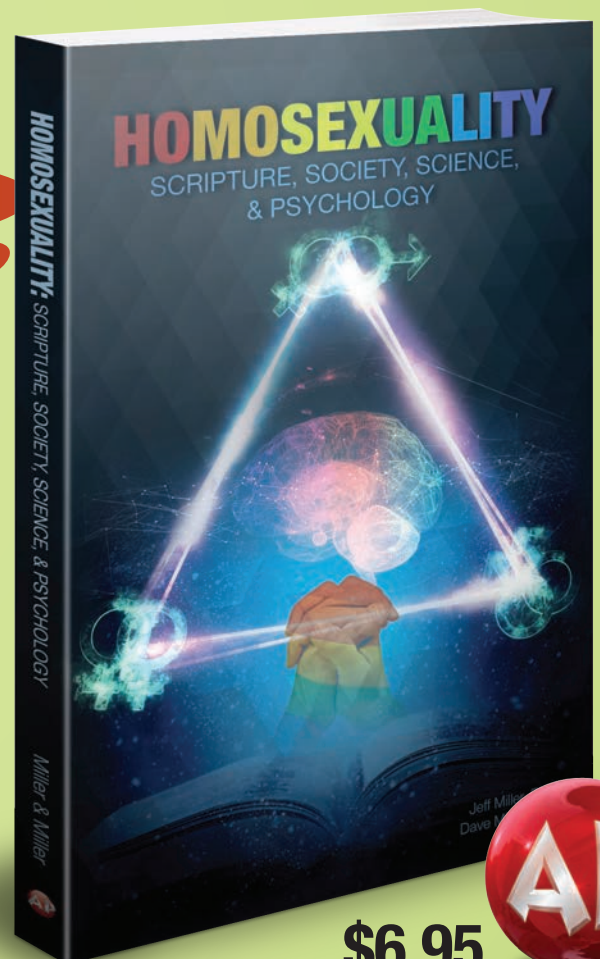


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Response to a Facebook Post:

The Lord's Supper on Sunday?

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

THE following critique is a response to an AP Facebook post which took issue with the article “Sunday & the Lord’s Supper” on the AP website [<https://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=1254&to pic=446>]. The article demonstrates that the Bible authorizes Christians to partake of the Lord’s Supper on Sunday and only on Sunday. While the author of the post makes no attempt whatsoever to answer the evidence presented in the article, he offers eight points that he considers to be adequate refutation of the article. The writer states emphatically: “I’m tired of people ripping scripture out of context and perverting it to make laws that God never intended.” A consideration of his eight points illustrates even further the validity of the referenced article and demonstrates, ironically, that such critics are often guilty of what they imagine in others.

“WAS THE LORD’S SUPPER MADE FOR MAN OR MAN FOR THE LORD’S SUPPER?”

THIS statement is an allusion to Jesus’ affirmation in Mark 2:27—“And He said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.’” The writer apparently assumes that the Lord’s Supper is a direct parallel to the Sabbath. It is not, but even if that were the case, what did

Jesus mean by this statement? Did He mean that, since God intended the Sabbath to be a benevolent requirement in which both man and animal would be given a day of much needed rest, it was nothing more than a general guideline that could be altered or ignored at will if the situation necessitated it? And that, therefore, as a parallel, even if God indicated that the Lord’s Supper was to be observed on Sunday, He would not be so “nit-picky” or “legalistic” as to actually expect everyone to comply even if inconvenient?¹ If so, how does one explain the following incident?

Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. They put him under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him. Then the LORD said to Moses, “The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp.” So, as the LORD commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died (Numbers 15:32-36).

The fact that “the Sabbath was made for man” most certainly did not mean that God approved of violating the Sabbath. In reality, the meaning of Jesus’ statement in Mark

2:27 is that God built into the Sabbath law a compassionate regard for both man and animal—and **no one should violate the very precepts that God designed for man’s good.** While it was intended as a compassionate law for man’s good, it was not **optional.** However, the Jews of Jesus’ day had corrupted God’s original intentions by placing their own **added** restrictions and misinterpretations on the people, thereby losing sight of the original Sabbath laws.² Further, the fact that every day belongs to God does not nullify the fact that God can and has set aside certain days and required people to observe those days in special ways (e.g., the Sabbath and the annual feast days under Moses and the Lord’s Supper under Christ).

“SOME LOOK AT ACTS 20 AS CREATING A LAW, I SEE A NARRATIVE OF A MIRACLE. PAUL BROUGHT A MAN BACK TO LIFE. THAT’S AMAZING.”

YES, the performance of a miracle was certainly “amazing”—but why? Because it was intended to serve the purpose for which all miracles were performed by God’s emissaries: to confirm or authenticate the orally-presented Word.³ However, Luke’s report of Paul’s meeting with the Christians in Troas in Acts 20 surely had additional purposes—not the least of which was to clarify for all Christians for all time precisely what Jesus predicted would take place:

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.... However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come (John 14:26; 16:13).

In other words, the apostles were charged and empowered by God to set into place the **legal** parameters of the Christian religion, enabling the churches to worship and live in accordance with God's directives. The observance of the Lord's Supper by the early churches, like Troas, was intended to be **prototypical**. It was a demonstration of God's intention for all the churches. Paul made this very point abundantly clear several times in his remarks to the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians: "as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia" (16:1); "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you" (11:23); "the rest I will set in order when I come" (11:34); "as in all the churches of the saints" (14:33); "the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (14:37).

Observe that the Facebook post suggests an underlying assumption that "law" is a negative, undesirable thing. But why would anyone speak derisively as if "law" is somehow bad or negative—and imply that God would not create laws for us? Throughout history, from the Garden forward, God has been a God of law. And His laws are neither "burdensome" (1 John 5:3) nor undesirable (Psalm 19:10). Quite the opposite, God's law is "holy, and the commandment holy and just and good" (Romans 7:12). An attitude that desires to view the religion of Christ as devoid of law is a shameful attitude—the very opposite attitude of the psalmist who expressed "love" for God's laws and saw them as desirable and indispensable (Psalm 119:97; 19:7-14).

"DON'T LET ANYONE JUDGE YOU ABOUT KEEPING OR NOT KEEPING HOLY DAYS AND FEASTS."

THIS misuse of Colossians 2:16 misconstrues Paul's remarks which pertained

to outdated Jewish regulations: circumcision, sabbaths/feast days, New Moon, etc. The context demonstrates that he was saying that one must not allow himself to be judged for refusing to observe **obsolete** religion (i.e., the Law of Moses was no longer in effect—Hebrews 8:13; 9:15-17; Romans 7:6; Colossians 2:14). He was certainly not speaking of the religion of Christ. Those who practiced various doctrines that were not part of the religion of Christ were guilty of engaging in "the commandments and doctrines of men" and "self-imposed religion" (2:23). Likewise, observance of the Lord's Supper on some day other than Sunday is a doctrine that came from the mind of man, not God. It is self-imposed—not God-imposed worship.⁴ In stark contrast, Sunday has been the premiere day of the week for the public worship of God via Christianity for 2,000 years, and the Lord's Supper has always been associated with that first day of the week worship.

"LOVE GOD AND LOVE OTHERS, THOSE ARE THE ONLY 'MUST DO'S' IN THE NEW COVENANT."

THIS allusion to Jesus' remarks in Matthew 22:37-39 leaves the impression that loving God and loving fellowman **excludes** requirements like worshipping God "acceptably" (Hebrews 12:28). This misunderstanding of Jesus' words advocates the notion that as long as we truly love God and others, there are no restrictions or requirements to which we are obligated to conform. Ripping Jesus' words from their context, this view fails to realize that He was saying that the **only way to love** is to do so **through God's law**. For example, when the law says, "Do not steal," to steal would be unloving to the person from whom the person stole. The laws of Christ that forbid lying, cheating, committing adultery, etc. are divinely intended to specify **how** to conduct oneself in a loving way. Hence, as Paul made clear, love **fulfills** the law by **obeying** it (Romans 13:8-10). Jesus reiterated the same thing in John 14:15—"If you love

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

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PASSAGE	ATTITUDE	ACTION
Deuteronomy 10:12-13	Fear/Love—heart	Walk/Ways
Joshua 24:14	Sincerity	Truth
1 Samuel 12:14, 24	Fear/with all your heart	In truth
2 Kings 10:31	With all his heart	Walk in the Law
1 Chronicles 13:8; 15:13	With all their might	The proper order
2 Chronicles 31:21	With all his heart	In the Law/commandment
Ecclesiastes 12:13	Fear God	Keep commands
Isaiah 1:19	Willing/Consent	Obedient
John 4:24	Spirit	Truth
Acts 10:35	Fear Him	Work righteousness
Romans 1:9	With my Spirit	In the Gospel
James 2:17	Faith	Works
1 John 3:18	Word & tongue	Deed & truth

Me, **keep My commandments**” and in John 15:14—“You are My friends **if you do whatever I command you.**” John did the same in 1 John 5:3—“For this is the love of God, **that we keep His commandments.** And His commandments are not burdensome.” No wonder the psalmist declared: “I obey your statutes, for I love them greatly” (Psalm 119:167). No wonder God stated emphatically to the Israelites of Jeremiah’s day: “Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people” (Jeremiah 7:23). So the only way, by definition, to love God and love our fellowman is by **obeying God’s commands** which, in turn, **define how** to love.

“IF A GROUP GETS TOGETHER DURING THE WEEK AND WANTS TO HONOR GOD AND REMEMBER THE SACRIFICE THAT JESUS MADE, WHO ARE WE TO JUDGE THEM?”

THIS mindset elevates human motives and preferences above God’s instructions. But God has always required **both**

from people—good motives **and** conformity to His instructions. One cannot and must not elevate one above the other. The above chart demonstrates God’s will on the matter.

According to God, one may not “honor” Him without complying with His directives as to **how** to do so. Moses recalled God’s explicit articulation of this very fact immediately after He burned to death Aaron’s two sons: “By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, and before all the people **I will be honored**” (Leviticus 10:3, NASB). When the two boys chose to offer “unauthorized fire” (vs. 1, ESV), they **dishonored** God. It would do no good to complain: “If those boys wanted to get together and honor God by sacrificing to Him, who are we to judge them?” The same may be said for many other individuals in Bible history who sought to approach God, but they did so without following divine protocols and were rejected accordingly, including Cain (Genesis 4:5), Saul (1 Samuel

13:9ff.; 15:20-23), Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:7; 1 Chronicles 15:13), Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:16-18), et al. It is just this attitude that has led to a host of other alterations in Christian worship, including candle lighting services, sprinkling babies, instrumental music, choirs, rosary beads, the papacy—the list is endless. All such illicit innovations come from the mind of men and do not honor God (cf. Colossians 2:23).

Further, the querist asks: “Who are we to judge them?” The use of the word “judge” with regard to those who alter God’s worship directives by partaking of the Lord’s Supper during the week is also a misuse of Scripture. “Judge not that you be not judged” (Matthew 7:1) certainly does not exclude making accurate applications of Scripture in ascertaining correct worship. We are not guilty of unscripturally judging individuals simply because we point out that they have made changes to God’s Word and engage in “will worship.” Rather, Jesus made plain that He and His Word

judges them (John 12:48). We're simply observing, acknowledging, and calling attention to God's own judgment on such conduct. Read 1 Corinthians 5:12-13.

"THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS."

PAUL stated that the law of sin and death, i.e., the law that pronounces spiritual death upon you when you sin (Romans 8:2), is still in effect. The only way a person can escape the guilt of sin is by the law of the spirit, i.e., the Gospel of Christ. Yet the only way to embrace the Gospel of Christ is via an obedient faith (Romans 1:5; 16:26) which includes such "do's" as faith (Romans 5:1), repentance (Romans 2:4), oral confession (Romans 10:10), and immersion (Romans 6:3-4). These are divine obligations, i.e., "**laws**." Does anyone honestly think that all law has been eliminated in Christ? If so, can we now lie, cheat, steal, and murder with impunity? Or does Jesus Christ have laws against such actions that remain in effect? He absolutely does! The New Testament is filled with laws from God to which both Christians and non-Christians are amenable. For example:

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revellies, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21).

"LET'S COME AND FELLOWSHIP AROUND THE LORD'S TABLE NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE TO, BUT BECAUSE

WE CAN, THROUGH THE LOVE AND GRACE THAT HE GAVE US."

SUCH statements imply that striving to conform precisely to God's directives regarding the Lord's Table makes a person guilty of observing the Lord's Supper only because he **has** to—again, betraying an attitude of aversion toward law and a disrespectful attitude toward the God Who gave us His laws. But, as already noted, God requires both complete conformity to His specifications as well as a proper attitude of gratitude for His love and grace. The complete inconsistency and self-contradiction of such thinking is seen in the fact that the only way a person **even knows** about the Lord's Supper is that it is **set forth in Scripture**. So why is the questioner **not** guilty of legalistic behavior for observing the Lord's Supper, but the person who observes the Lord's Supper **when** God said to do so is disingenuous and guilty of making laws God didn't make? In fact, according to the same "reasoning," the accuser is guilty of what he imagines in others if he conforms to **any** of the religious requirements of the New Testament—including prayer, singing, giving of his means, reading the Bible, and so forth. Are any of these actions necessary? If even one is viewed as required, the accuser is guilty of what he condemns in others.

"THIS ARTICLE (WHICH IS JUST ANOTHER COC DENOMINATIONAL CREED) IS ANOTHER OF THE MANY REASONS I'M NO LONGER A PART OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST DENOMINATION."

THIS disparaging allusion to the church we read about in the Bible as a "denomination" is equally inaccurate, unscriptural, and indefensible. After all, Jesus **did** declare He would establish His church (Matthew 16:18), did He

not? Is the questioner suggesting that that very church cannot exist today without being a denomination? If Isaiah, Micah, and Daniel could predict that God would eventually establish His kingdom/church on Earth (Isaiah 2:1-5; Micah 4:1-5; Daniel 2:44), and Jesus then stated emphatically that He was about to do so during the lifetime of His apostles (Mark 9:1), and He did just that 50 days after His crucifixion in the city of Jerusalem in Acts 2, why would anyone speak derisively of that church and act as if it could not possibly exist today—or that it is to be equated with the entire denominational world that consists of a host of conflicting doctrines and practices invented by mere men?⁵

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Situation ethics is clearly condemned in Scripture. See Dave Miller (2004), "Situation Ethics—Extended Version," <https://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=645&topic=38>.
- ² See Dave Miller (1996), *Piloting the Strait* (Pulaski, TN: Sain Publications), pp. 410ff.
- ³ E.g., Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4. See Dave Miller (2020), *Modern-Day Miracles? Do Miracles, Tongue-Speaking, & Holy Spirit Baptism Occur Today?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), pp. 7ff.
- ⁴ Various English versions capture the meaning of the term Paul used in Colossians 2:23 to pinpoint the concept that Christians have no right to adjust, alter, or supplement God's directives, including "will worship" (ASV/KJV/YLT), "self-imposed religion" (NKJV/NRSV/OJB), "self-made religion" (ESV/NASB/ISV), "made-up religion" (ERV), "part of a human religion" (NCV), "self-chosen holiness" (NMB), "vain religion" (Wycliffe), "self-imposed religious piety" (MOUNCE).
- ⁵ For more on the origin of the New Testament Church, see *What the Bible Says About the Church of Christ*, https://apologeticspress.org/pdfs/e-books_pdf/wtbsatcoc.pdf.



NOTE FROM

The Editor



New Homosexuality Book

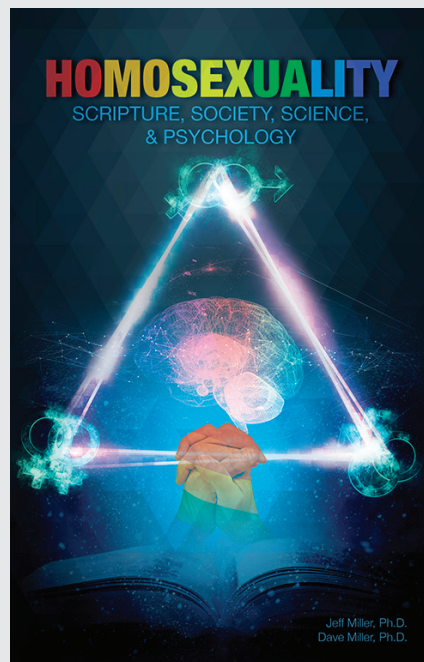
We are living in unbelievable times in America. A vocal, aggressive element is seeking to exterminate the Christian worldview from the American way of life. They are endeavoring to silence (“cancel”) all who disagree with their Marxist agenda. Those who know that God exists, that the Bible is His inspired Word, and that Christianity is authored by Deity, are under divine obligation not to flinch in the face of such intimidation and bully tactics. Hence, AP has remained firm in its efforts to teach God’s view of gender and human sexuality.

In harmony with that directive, we have just released a new book that revisits the subject of homosexuality. According to the evidence, neither Scripture, nor science, nor psychology support the acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle. Regardless of society’s current feelings on

the matter, homosexuality is physically, psychologically, and spiritually toxic. Those who have genuine love for homosexuals will discourage its

practice. Indeed, the mission of Apologetics Press has always been to “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15). After all, precious souls are at stake. The world around us is rushing headlong toward the precipice of moral and spiritual corruption that will end in an eternity of torment (Matthew 10:28; 2 Peter 2:4-9; Revelation 20:11-15). May we heed the words of Jude: “keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt; **save others by snatching them out of the fire.**”

Dave Miller



See Center Spread
for More Details